तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamrita

Bindu

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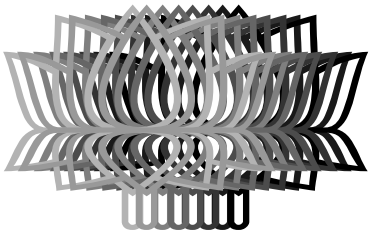

Simply by Hearing

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 4.29.38

Translation and purport by

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

so 'cirād eva rājarṣe syād acyuta-kathāśrayaḥ
śṛṇvataḥ śraddadhānasya nityadā syād adhīyataḥ

O best of kings, one who is faithful, who is always hearing the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is always engaged in the culture of Krishna consciousness and in hearing of the Lord's activities, very soon becomes eligible to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face.

PURPORT

Constant engagement in the transcendental loving service of Vasudev means constantly hearing the glories of the Lord. The principles of *bhakti-yoga—śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam / arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyaṁ sakhyam ātma-nivedanam* [*S.B.* 7.5.23] — are the only means by which perfection can be attained. Simply by hearing of the glories of the Lord, one is elevated to the transcendental position.

Literature Propaganda and Transcendental Welfare

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada

On the evening of 12 July 1936 at the Gaudiya Math temple at Bagh Bazaar, Calcutta, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada spoke to a group of respectable gentlemen. He criticized the popular idea of daridra-nārāyaṇa, *"poor Narayan", a common term in India since before the time of Gandhi used by those promoting charitable works with the mistaken idea that poor people are directly Narayan.*

We *jīvas* are really poor, no doubt. We are poor *jīvas* but we are not poor *nārāyaṇas*. Our poverty should be diminished, and to that end wealth should be accumulated, but what kind of wealth? It is the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, *i.e.* causeless love for the absolute truth — Krishna. And for this, we should pray to Him in the same way as a *vaiṣṇava mahājana* prays, in the following lines:

prema-dhana vinā vyartha daridra jīvana
'dāsa' kari' vetana more deha prema-dhana

Life without Love is useless and poor, they say,
Appoint me in Thy service, Oh Lord, with Love as my pay. (*Cc. antya* 20.37)

[In a play on words, Srila Saraswati Thakur is pointing out that we are not *daridra-nārāyaṇa;* rather we are *daridra-jīvana*. "*Jīvana*" means

"life". We are not a poverty stricken God. Rather, we are tiny souls whose lives are poor, being bereft of the supreme wealth of love of Krishna.]

Our prayer should be of the aforesaid nature. As soon as we feel the necessity for *kṛṣṇa-prema* we naturally begin to feel dislike for everything but Krishna. In absence of this, other tendencies and considerations take firm hold of our mind, exhorting us to be great workers, forgetful of the main object of the *Pancharatra*.

Now, what course should we adopt with regard to our propaganda work in England? Mahaprabhu enjoins us to proclaim His Name throughout the length and breadth of this world — from small hamlets to big cities. At present, gross worldly names are in vogue everywhere — let the transcendental name be henceforth proclaimed all over the world!

We do not belittle the importance of the *pancharatrik* process of establishing temples with deities; but we are of the opinion that the higher activity is propaganda work. And Mahaprabhu's open desire was that the transcendental name should be proclaimed everywhere. To that end, we think a sufficient number of pamphlets should be published. The rich are the so-called big men of the world, who are running after fame, females and money. They will not listen to our words even if we cry hoarse in their ears, so what is the use of wasting our time in trying to make them hear? We say, therefore, that the line of our propaganda work should be to publish a sufficient number of pamphlets even at the cost of possible suspension of building temples. This will show to them the insignificance of the discoveries of truths that have been expressed in their philosophies or applied sciences, in contrast to the enormity and magnitude of the subject matter of our discussions.

So far about our propaganda work. Now, as to the manner in which that work is to be carried out. A self-conceited or vainglorious man can never successfully carry on propaganda work. How will it be possible for him? The Absolute Truth never manifests itself to a vainglorious man who looks upon himself as the only preacher of truths. Such a man can do no good to the world. Of such persons, some will be fond of prohibited foods as are available at Kalighat and some will be malicious patriots engrossed with considerations of their own advantages as opposed to others' interests. Others will be in the clutches of self-enjoying propensities, or its opposite, the tendency toward renunciation, with a view to gain self-emolument or salvation, while the rest will make a pretentious show of *bhakti*. But none of them will have the least idea of the Absolute Truth divested of the slightest trace of insincerity and maliciousness.

Oh, how deplorable it is that the propaganda of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the glorious, unique, devotional teaching of India, is stopped here, in the very land of its origin. And it is not less regrettable to see people suffer under the mistaken idea that mere ringing of bells in places of worship, or touring of holy places, or ostentatiously reading of holy works like the *Bhāgavata* with no other purpose than earning one's livelihood, or playing the role of preceptor by a right of heredity only, are sure signs of *bhakti*, they being quite ignorant of the true significance of right worship, the true object of pilgrimage, the right duty of the proper ways of preceptorship, the true culture of theistic works like the *Bhāgavata* and the real difference between true and false *bhakti*. And it is painful to see people wasting their valuable time in no better work than mischievous, ill-conceived criticisms of others' conduct. They excel only in giving advice to others. Their damned mind is, no doubt, responsible for this. So every morning on rising from bed they should make their wicked mind hear the following immortal song of Thakur Bhaktivinoda:

bhaja re bhaja re āmār mana ati manda
(bhaja) braja-bane rādhā-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāravinda
(bhaja) gaura-gadādharādwaita guru-nityānanda
(smara) śrīnivās, haridās, murāri, mukunda
(smara) rūpa-sanātana-jīva-raghunātha-dvandva
(smara) rāghava-gopāla-bhaṭṭa swarūpa-rāmānanda
(smara) goṣṭhi-saha karṇapūra, sena śivānanda
(smara) rūpānuga sādhu-jana bhajana-ānanda
(*Gītāvali Bhajana-gītā* song 1)

In this song, the mind is asked, first of all, to hold *bhajan* of Radha-Krishna, in Their joyful activity, in the sacred woodland of Vraja. In comparative view, the degrees of excellence of the five *rasas*, from *mādhurya* (consorthood) to *śānta* (the state in which active service is wanting), are gradually lowering. A servitor in the last mentioned position (i.e., *śānta-rasa*) is neither actively engaged in *bhajan* nor against it. He will neither oppose *bhajan* nor actively hold it.

Now, *bhajan* or *bhakti* may be of different kinds. There is such a thing as *micha-bhakti* (false *bhakti*), as opposed to *śuddha-bhakti* (unalloyed *bhakti*); the former kind of *bhakti* being taken recourse to by adherents of karma, who again are followers of *smṛti*. And Thakur Narottama Das warns us against such false *bhakti* by saying:

karmī jñanī michā-bhakta na hā'be taya anurakta
śuddha-bhajanete kara mana (*Prema-bhakti-candrika* 6.18)

The cult of the so-called social reformers (or society makers) of the past or present age is quite different from the ideas and principles of *bhaktas*. And the followers of the former are engaged, at present, in various movements relating to personal advantages and self-enjoyment.

Those agitators, who, leaving aside all considerations of *bhakti*, are busily engaged in movements for temporal advantages only, are doing harm to themselves. And their failure to serve Krishna, Who is the emporium or rather effigy of all endless, immeasurable nectar of love, joys and pleasures, bespeaks simply of their ignorance of the real state of affairs. And such desistance of service to Krishna gradually turns a man into an upholder of *nirviśeṣa-vāda* (i.e. the doctrine of the unspecified-ness of the absolute truth). And what can be more deplorable for mankind than such misfortune! So, to counteract the aforesaid tendencies in us, we should sing every morning, advising our wicked mind to hold *bhajan*, which is impossible if we be unmindful of the dictum:

tṛṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

— which means that *hari-kīrtana* should be continued ceaselessly and with the humility of low grass.

Now, what is the object of our *bhajan*? It is only the holy feet of Radha-Krishna, roaming about freely in the woodland of Vraja. And what should be our line of conduct in holding *bhajan*? Mahaprabhu's advice to Srila Das Goswami in this connection, is as follows:

grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe

amānī mānada haṣā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe

Have no worldly talk, nor pay heed to it,
Wear no good clothes, nor rich food eat,
Have *kṛṣṇa-nāma* always, humbly, on your tongue,
Serve Radha-Krishna in the closet of the mind, all day long. (*Cc. antya* 6.236-237)

In the aforesaid verse, the first two advices are in the negative and the remaining two are in the affirmative. By "*vraja-seva*" Mahaprabhu means service to Krishna by one who has a transcendental body and whose self-realization is complete. People ignorant of this generally turn into mental speculators and cannot rightly understand the teachings of the Gaudiya Math.

— From the anthology *Srila Prabhupada's Discourses,* quoted in *Gaudiya Vaisnava Biographies,* Nectar Books, Union City GA, USA.

Śrī Guru-Vandanā

By the poet Sri Sanatan Das

Although the following song is found in many Bengali Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *songbooks, neither scholars nor devotees seem to anything about the author other than his giving of his name as "Sanatan Das" in the last line. This Sanatan Das is almost certainly not the same as Srila Sanatan Goswami, as the poem is written in Bengali and there is no record of any writings of Srila Sanatan Goswami in Bengali.*

This beautiful song focuses on aspects of guru-tattva *and* śiṣya-kartavya *(the transcendental position of guru and the duty of a disciple) which are not found in either the* Guru-vandanā *of Srila Narottam Das Thakur or the* Gurvaṣṭaka *of Srila Visvanath Chakravarti.*

āśraya kariyā vandoṅ śrī-guru-caraṇa
jāhā haite mile bhāi kṛṣṇa-prema-dhana

Taking refuge of Sri Guru, I bow at his feet. Oh brother, by this the treasure of *kṛṣṇa-prema* is attained.

jīvera nistāra lāgi nanda-suta-hari
bhuvane prakāśa hana guru-rūpa dhari

For the deliverance of the *jīvas,* Nanda's son Sri Hari is manifest in the world, assuming the form of Sri Guru.

mahimāya guru kṛṣṇa eka kari jāna
guru-ājñā hṛde saba satya kari māna

Know that in glory guru and Krishna are one. Accept Sri Guru's orders in your heart, considering them to be the divine reality.

satya-jñāne guru-vākye yāhāra viśvāsa
avaśya tāhāra haya vraja-bhume vāsa

Whoever has firm faith in the divine wisdom of Sri Guru's words resides eternally in Vrajabhumi.

yāra prati gurudeva hana parasanna
kona vighne seho nāhi haya avasanna

Whoever courts the pleasure of Sri Gurudeva in all respects will not become disheartened by any obstacles.

kṛṣṇa ruṣṭa haile guru rākhibāre pāre
guru ruṣṭa haile kṛṣṇa rākhibāre nāre

If one makes Krishna angry, Sri Guru can protect him, but if one makes Sri Guru angry, even Krishna cannot protect him.

guru mātā guru pitā guru hana pati
guru vinā e-saṁsāre nāhi āra gati

Sri Guru is our mother, father, lord and master. Without Sri Guru there is no other recourse in this world of transmigratory existence.

guruke manuṣya-jñāna nā kara kakhana
guru nindā kabhu karṇe nā kara śravaṇa

Never for a moment consider Sri Guru to be an ordinary mortal, and never lend an ear to any defamation of Sri Guru.

guru nindukera mukha kabhu nā heribe
yathā haya guru-nindā tathā nā yāibe

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Do not even look to the face of one who vilifies Sri Guru, and do not go to any place where Sri Guru is criticized.

gurura vikriyā yadi dekhaha kakhana
tathāpi avajñā nāhi kara kadācana

Even if you observe at any time some forbidden activity performed by Sri Guru, still you should never for a moment hold him in disregard.

guru pāda-padme rahe yāra niṣṭhā-bhakti
jagat tārite sei dhare mahā-śakti

Whoever maintains unflinching devotion to Sri Guru's lotus feet possesses the power to deliver the entire world.

hena guru pāda-padma karaha vandanā
yāhā haite ghuce bhāi sakala yantraṇā

O brother, for whoever bows down to the lotus feet of Sri Guru, all afflictions are terminated.

guru pāda-padme nitya ye kare vandanā
śire dhari vandi āmi taṅhāra caraṇa

I hold upon my head and bow down to the feet of whoever constantly makes obeisance at the lotus feet of Sri Guru.

śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma hṛde kari āśa
śrī-guru-vandanā kare sanātana dāsa

Desiring the lotus feet of Sri Guru within his heart, Sanatan Das makes this *guru-vandanā*.

— Translated by Kisori Vinoda Das.

Drink the Holy Name

The Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* is very popular in Orissa. To this day one can find active *kīrtana* groups in most villages. *Cari-prahara* (12 hour), *aṣṭa-prahara* (24 hour), and *ṣola-prahara* (48 hour) *kīrtana* is common to observe various festivals. It is common in Orissa in Hindu society that the bride is initiated into the *mahā-mantra* during the wedding ceremony.

There is a nice song they sing about the *mahā-mantra*:

rāma nāma lāḍḍua kṛṣṇa-nāma ghī
hari nāma khaṇḍa kṣīra ghori' ghori' pi

"Rama's name is a *lāḍḍu*, Krishna's name is ghee, and the name of Hari is sweet rice — mix them all together and drink!"